



# Governors' Mansions of the South

*Ann Liberman*

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From the Greek Revival architecture found in Mississippi to the Queen Anne style of North Carolina, governors' mansions in the American South convey a passion for antiquity, as well as a regional elegance. Ann Liberman, author of *Governors' Mansions of the Midwest*, spent much of her life in Texas and admires the remarkable architecture of the antebellum South—a respect that she now brings to her newest book.

*Governors' Mansions of the South* is devoted to the eleven states of the old Confederacy, plus Kentucky and West Virginia, and offers a brick-and-mortar reflection of the region's rich history. It includes the country's oldest governor's mansion in continuous use, in Virginia, plus two built as recently as the 1960s, in Louisiana and Georgia. These mansions reflect an architectural cohesiveness found throughout the South, as Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival styles imbue antebellum houses with a classical aura, while others built in the first quarter of the twentieth century reflect the monumental eclectic styles of the Beaux Arts era.

Liberman provides readers with a room-by-room guided tour of each of the buildings as she comments on their architecture, symbolism, and lore. She places the mansions in historical context, describing how their locations were chosen, how they were designed and decorated, and how they have been preserved, lost, or transformed over the years. While focusing primarily on the buildings themselves, she also highlights those governors and their wives who played significant roles in the mansions' maintenance or renovation. Alise O'Brien's accompanying color photographs capture the lavish interiors and furnishings as well as the dignified exteriors and landscapes.

"Living in the Governor's Mansion is a remarkable honor," writes former governor of Florida Jeb Bush in his foreword, "but it is also a constant, humbling reminder that the people who occupy the mansions are, indeed, the public's servants." For site visitors or architecture buffs, *Governors' Mansions of the South* is an enlightening introduction to these historic executive homes, reminding us that, however opulent, they provide a personal connection between the public and its government—and connect past generations to the present.

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